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Item 13 of the provisional agenda

DATE AND PLACE OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

Note by the Secretariat

In compliance with General Conference resolution GC.10/Res.11, reports on the consultations with the Government of Colombia concerning the offer of the Government to host the eleventh session of the General Conference at Cartagena de Indias in 2005, including the financial implications.

Introduction

1. At its tenth session the General Conference adopted resolution GC.10/Res.11 on date and place of its eleventh session. The Conference took note with appreciation of the kind offer of Colombia to host the session at Cartagena de Indias in 2005. It also requested the Director-General to undertake the necessary consultations with the Government of Colombia with particular regard to the financial implications deriving from holding the eleventh session at Cartagena de Indias, and to submit a report on the result to the Board for decision.

2. On 12 February 2004 a meeting was convened with representatives of the Permanent Mission of Colombia and the UNIDO Secretariat to discuss the steps required for implementing the General Conference resolution, with particular attention to the financial implications deriving from holding the eleventh session of the Conference at Cartagena de Indias.

I. FACILITIES

3. The Cartagena de Indias Convention Centre is recognized as a state-of-the-art facility, and has been the successful venue of recent major conferences, including some sponsored by United Nations organizations. There are ample air-conditioned conference rooms, offices and interpretation facilities. Arrangements have been initiated for a site inspection to evaluate specific aspects. The Centre is not owned by the Government, and therefore its use would be subject to a special agreement.

4. The city of Cartagena boasts an excellent infrastructure, telecommunication links and a wide range of restaurants and hotels in various categories, including some near the Convention Centre, and an international airport.

II. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

5. The meeting between the Permanent Mission and the Secretariat underlined that the basis for determining the financial arrangements for holding a session away from Vienna was rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Conference, which states: "The actual additional costs directly or indirectly involved in holding a session away from the seat of the Organization shall be borne by the host Government." As was the case for previous sessions held away from

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Headquarters, an agreement would be drawn up in which the financial obligations of the Government are specified, as well as other aspects, such as transport, police protection and local personnel are outlined.

6. It was reiterated that the previous sessions of the Conference held outside Vienna (the second and fifth sessions) had taken place in 1987 (Bangkok) and 1993 (Yaoundé), respectively. Therefore, the available precedents for additional costs to be borne by the host Government were based on the prevailing practice of those years. For initial estimating purposes, those costs were updated to take account of inflation and current travel costs, also taking account of interim developments, such as remote translation and typing. The estimates were made available to the Permanent Mission in mid-2003 as preliminary information, together with a detailed list of requirements in terms of conference rooms, offices, equipment, other facilities and local support staff. The estimates shown in table 1 of the annex to the present document represent a further revision, taking account of more recent developments, including travel costs, daily subsistence allowance rates, staffing requirements, etc.

7. At the 12 February 2004 meeting it was recognized that certain aspects of recent Conference sessions presented complications in determining precisely the "actual additional costs directly or indirectly involved" in holding a session away from Vienna. These costs relate to various side events, such as round tables and the industrial development forum, and the presence of Heads of State and other dignitaries. Whereas positive feedback from the introduction of these elements left no doubt as to the advisability of continuing that approach (see, for example, resolution GC.10/Res.1), they are not necessarily considered an official part of the actual legislative session.

8. Therefore, associated expenses may be subject to interpretation for the assignment of financial responsibility. As demonstrated in the tenth session, there is some flexibility for introducing innovative elements in Vienna owing to existing arrangements and the layout of the Austria Center Vienna (ACV). Some examples of the type of expenses that arise in this respect are:

- Rental of rooms for round tables;
- Interpretation costs for round tables (Selected interpretation was provided for round tables held in the context of the tenth session. For a session held in Latin America, it is envisaged that interpretation at least into Spanish would be required for any round tables);
- Difference in travel costs for keynote speakers in round tables, compared with travel to Vienna (including official entitlements for stopovers and daily subsistence allowance);
- Additional costs arising from the presence of Heads of State and other dignitaries (security, landing fees, etc.), compared to costs in Vienna.

The responsibility for covering these costs would have to be clarified in the event that the Conference is held outside Vienna. Estimated costs associated with side events during the tenth session of the General Conference are shown in table 2 of the annex to the present document.

9. Another consideration is that of recent security issues with respect to United Nations installations. Whereas two security officers were present at Yaoundé for the fifth session of the Conference, interim developments in recent years require a stronger security presence for a major meeting.

III. DATE OF THE SESSION

10. The meeting confirmed that the dates booked with the ACV management for the eleventh session (28 November-2 December 2005) would also be suitable should the session be held at Cartagena de Indias.

IV. ACTION REQUIRED OF THE BOARD

11. The Board is invited to take note of the information contained in the present document and decide on the date and place of the eleventh session of the Conference.

Annex

ESTIMATED COSTS

Table 1. Covered by host country[a]

	Estimated cost (In US dollars)
Preparatory missions (3 missions composed of 2-5 staff members each, including entitlements for staff at various levels)	56,000
Staff travel—150 staff at various levels (UNIDO: approximately 50; UNOV approximately 100, including Conference Services, Documents Control, Documents Distribution, Security[b], interpreters[c])	1,140,000
- Based on entitlement Vienna-Cartagena-Vienna as of April 2004 (includes 3 travel days each direction)	
- Staggered, function-related arrival dates	
Tickets $768,000 (business class), terminal expenses $36,000, DSA $336,000	
Shipment (2,400 kg air freight based on April 2004 rates)	8,000
- Includes conference documents and files, conference and reference material, security/ registration material (assuming local availability of sufficient EDP equipment and photocopy paper)	
Replacement staff (personnel costs for 10 replacement staff to cover headquarters meetings during UNOV staff absence from Vienna)	12,000
Total	**$1,216,000**
Conference premises, equipped and furnished as per specifications (PCs/printers, presentation, reproduction and photocopying equipment, screen, video, etc.)	Undetermined
Local support staff (approximately 50)	Undetermined
Other local facilities (bank, medical, post office, travel agency, etc.)	Undetermined
Local transportation (including some cars with drivers) from hotels to conference centre	Undetermined

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[a] Does not reflect any special arrangements negotiated by host country, such as special daily subsistence allowance based on government-provided accommodation, or special group air fares.

[b] Travel of security officers calculated from Vienna (i.e. "worst-case" scenario).

[c] Translators and editorial staff work via remote translation, therefore travel required only for eight précis writers preparing summary records. Travel of interpreters calculated from Vienna (i.e. "worst-case" scenario).

Table 2. Side events

	Euros
Fees	30,000
Travel and DSA	72,000
Facilities (rooms, equipment, etc.)	3,000
Printing	3,000
Total	**108,000**

Notes

1. Amounts are approximate, based on round tables and Industrial Development Forum held during the tenth session of the General Conference.

2. Does not reflect costs associated with presence of Heads of State and other dignitaries who were not directly involved in round tables.

3. As interpretation for round tables was provided on an "as available" basis, no additional costs were incurred.